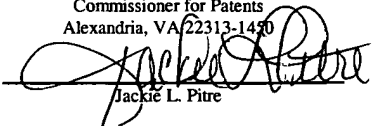


IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



Application No.: 10/698,010  
Confirmation No.: 7409  
Filing Date: October 30, 2003  
Inventor: Landry et al.  
Title: SPINAL STABILIZATION  
SYSTEMS AND METHODS  
USING MINIMALLY  
INVASIVE SURGICAL  
PROCEDURES

§ Examiner: Unknown  
§ Art Unit: 3738  
§ Atty. Dkt. No.: 5259-10704  
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<p>CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.8 DATE OF DEPOSIT: <u>3/30/04</u> I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail on the date indicated above and is addressed to:  Commissioner for Patents Alexandria, VA 22313-1450  Jackie L. Pitre</p>
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**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Mail Stop Missing Parts  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Please amend the above-identified application as follows:

**Amendments to the Claims** are reflected in the listing of claims that begins on page 2 of this paper.

**Remarks** begin on page 7 of this paper.